

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 2-5, 8, and 10-20 were previously cancelled. Claim 27 has been canceled herein. Claim 21 has been amended herein. New claim 30 has been added. All claims currently pending in the referenced application are shown below. This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions and listings of the claims in the application. Please enter these claims as amended.

Listing of the Claims:

1. (Withdrawn) A process for modulating virulence of a *Streptococcus* comprising:
modifying a genomic fragment of the *Streptococcus*;
wherein at least part of the genomic fragment is capable of hybridizing to the isolated or recombinant nucleic acid molecule of claim 21; and
generating a clone having the modified genomic fragment.
- 2.-5. (Canceled).
6. (Withdrawn) The process according to claim 1, wherein modifying the genomic fragment comprises functionally deleting the at least part of the genomic fragment capable of hybridizing to the nucleotide sequence.
7. (Withdrawn) A clone of a *Streptococcus*, obtained by the process according to claim 1.
8. (Canceled).
9. (Withdrawn) A process for assaying virulence of a *Streptococcus* comprising:
assaying an ability of the *Streptococcus* to infect a subject;
wherein the *Streptococcus* comprises a genomic fragment associated with a virulence factor to infect a subject; and
wherein at least part of the genomic fragment is capable of hybridizing to the isolated or recombinant nucleic acid molecule of claim 21.

10.-20. (Canceled).

21. (Currently amended) An isolated or recombinant nucleic acid molecule comprising:

a first nucleotide sequence of *Streptococcus suis* origin

wherein the first nucleotide sequence comprises a contiguous sequence which hybridizes to the full length of nucleotides 89-263 of the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:37 at 65°C in a buffer having 0.5 M sodium phosphate, 1 mM EDTA, and 7% sodium dodecyl sulphate at a pH of 7.2,

wherein the first nucleic acid molecule remains hybridized to the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:37 after

washing twice with a buffer containing 40 mM sodium phosphate (pH 7.2), 1 mM EDTA and 5% sodium dodecyl sulphate for 30 minutes at 65°C and;

washing twice with a buffer containing 40 mM sodium phosphate (pH 7.2), 1 mM EDTA and 1% sodium dodecyl sulphate for 30 minutes at 65°C, and

~~wherein the complement of the nucleotide sequence encodes for a portion of a fibronectin/fibrinogen binding protein of Streptococcus suis.~~

22. (Previously Presented) A vector comprising the isolated or recombinant nucleic acid molecule of claim 21.

23. (Previously Presented) A host cell comprising the isolated or recombinant nucleic acid molecule of claim 21.

24. (Previously Presented) The host cell of claim 23, wherein the host cell is of a *Streptococcus* origin.

25. (Previously Presented) A composition comprising the isolated or recombinant nucleic acid molecule of claim 21.

26. (Previously presented) The complement of the isolated or recombinant nucleic acid molecule of claim 21.

27. (Canceled).

28. (Withdrawn) An isolated or recombinant nucleic acid molecule comprising: a nucleotide sequence for a fibronectin-/fibrinogen-binding protein of *Streptococcus suis*, wherein the nucleotide sequence comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:37.

29. (Withdrawn) An isolated or recombinant double stranded nucleic acid molecule comprising:

a gene encoding a fibronectin-/fibrinogen-binding protein; and

a means for hybridizing to the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:37 at 65°C in a buffer having 0.5 M sodium phosphate, 1 mM EDTA, and 7% sodium dodecyl sulphate at a pH of 7.2,

wherein the means remains hybridized after

washing twice with a buffer containing 40 mM sodium phosphate (pH 7.2), 1 mM EDTA and 5% sodium dodecyl sulphate for 30 minutes at 65°C; and

washing twice with a buffer containing 40 mM sodium phosphate (pH 7.2), 1 mM EDTA and 1% sodium dodecyl sulphate for 30 minutes at 65°C.

30. (New) The isolated or recombinant nucleic acid molecule of claim 21, wherein the complement of the first nucleotide sequence encodes for a portion of a fibronectin-/fibrinogen-binding protein of *Streptococcus suis*.